

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A bathing aid, comprising:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon; and

an upward-opening cover for closing the open top of the ~~bathtub~~ bathtub, except for an opening for allowing the bather to stick the head ~~through;~~ through, the cover and the bathtub capable of holding hot water, whereby the seat unit of the wheelchair with the bather sitting thereon is transferred through the open top into the bathtub with the cover opened, and then hot water is supplied into an area formed by the bathtub and the cover so that a ~~part~~ majority of the body of the bather is submerged under the hot water.

2. (Original) A bathing aid, comprising:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon and a drainage port for draining hot water from the bathtub;

a cover for closing the open top of the bathtub except for an opening for allowing the bather to stick the head through; and

an overflow prevention mechanism having an overflow port located on a surface of the cover facing the bathtub, a cover-side overflow pipe extending from the overflow port through a body of the cover, and a bathtub-side overflow pipe, one end of

which is connected to the cover-side overflow pipe when the cover is closed and the other end of which leads to either the drainage port or an external drainage pipe.

3. (Currently Amended) A bathing aid, comprising:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon;

a bathtub actuator having a motor, a vertical screw shaft rotated by the motor, and a movable unit having a ball screw engaged with the screw shaft and vertically moving with a rotation of the screw shaft; and

a bathtub supporter having a supportive shaft mounted on the movable unit for supporting a rear part of the bathtub, ~~a~~ at least one wheel located under a bottom of the bathtub at a position closer to a front than the supportive shaft, and a guide slope descending frontward, on which the at least one wheel runs,

———whereby a vertical motion of the movable unit in the bathtub actuator produces a vertical motion of the rear end of the bathtub through the supportive shaft, with the at least one wheel moving up or down along the guide slope, which changes the orientation of the bathtub so that the direction of the open top changes between an upward direction and a frontward direction.

4. (Currently Amended) The bathing aid according to claim 3, wherein the at least one wheel is located inward of either sidewall of the bathtub.

5. (Original) The bathing aid according to claim 3, wherein the motor is used to bring the bathtub one of three states including: a storage state where the open top of the bathtub is directed almost frontward; a setting state where a front edge of the bathtub is located close to a floor and the open top of the bathtub is directed obliquely frontward,

allowing the bather to be transferred into or out of the bathtub; and a normal bathing state where the open top of the bathtub is directed almost upward.

6. (Currently Amended) A bathing aid, comprising:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon;

a bathtub supporter for supporting the bathtub while allowing the bathtub to change its orientation so that a direction of the open top changes between an upward direction and a frontward direction; and

an expansible bogie-fastening element to which a predetermined part of the bogie unit is fastened for temporarily fixing the bogie unit, which element changes its position with a motion of the bathtub so that it retreats backward when the bathtub is moved toward an upright position while it expands forward when the bathtub is pushed ~~forward;~~forward.

—whereby the bathtub has ~~a~~ at least one wheel located under the bottom thereof that runs when the bathtub changes its orientation, and the bogie-fastening element expands forward when the at least one wheel comes onto the bogie-fastening element and exerts a pressure thereon from above, whereas the bogie-fastening element stands up and retreats backward when it is released from the pressure exerted by the at least one wheel.

7. (Currently Amended) A bathing aid, including:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit, and

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon,

whereby the seat unit of the wheelchair with the bather sitting thereon is transferred into the bathtub, and then hot water is supplied into the bathtub, ———wherein the seat unit has a set of first wheel-wheels running on a bogie-side guide rail located in the bogie unit and a set of second wheel-wheels running on a bathtub-side guide rail located in the bathtub, where the set of first wheel-wheels is free from contact with the bathtub-side guide rail and the set of second wheel-wheels is free from contact with the bogie-side guide rail.

8. (Currently Amended) The bathing aid according to claim 7, wherein the bogie-side guide rail has two cylindrical rail elements, one located parallel to and above the other, the set of first wheel-wheels is composed of a disk-shaped core clamped by an outer and inner disks each having a diameter greater than that of the core, and when the set of first wheel-wheels runs on the bogie-side guide rail, the core rolls in a space between the two rail elements, with the outer and inner disks clamping the two rail elements from both sides.

9. (Currently Amended) The bathing aid according to claim 7, wherein the bogie-side guide rail has a surface for the set of first wheel-wheels to run on, and an end part of the surface has an inclined profile that descends toward an end of the rail to be pointed to the bathtub when the bather is transferred into the bathtub.

10. (Currently Amended) A bathing aid, comprising:
a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;
a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon;
a tank, located above the bathtub, for storing hot water to be supplied into the bathtub,

a water supply pipe connecting the tank and the bathtub, where the water supply pipe is provided with a water supply valve having a first valve ~~body~~, and body placed in the tank;

a drainage pipe, an end of which is connected to the tank for draining hot water from the tank, where the drainage pipe is provided with a drainage valve having a second valve ~~body~~, body placed in the tank; and

a motor for pulling open either one or both of the valve bodies when water is supplied or drained, whereby either one or both of the first valve body and the second valve body open or close either or both of an inlet of the water supply pipe and an inlet of the drainage pipe as the one or both of the first valve body and the second valve body are submerged underwater in the tank.

11. (Original) A bathing aid, comprising:

a wheelchair separable into a seat unit for a bather to sit down on and a bogie unit located under the seat unit;

a bathtub having an open top for receiving the seat unit with the bather sitting thereon;

a water supplier for supplying hot water into the bathtub;

an input device for allowing a caregiver to choose a use of a liquid agent including a bath agent and/or a cleaning agent during bathing; and

a liquid injection mechanism having a container for storing the liquid agent beforehand and a liquid injector for injecting the liquid agent taken from the container into the hot water when the water supplier supplies the hot water into the bathtub and the use of the liquid agent is ordered through the input device.

12. (Canceled)